MASS. UM1.2:W374

UMASS/AMHERST
312066 0278 1309 1

Weapons Policies

A Survey of Police Department Practices Concerning Weapons and Related Issues

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION
JAN 13 1994
University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

Conducted by
Social and Demographic Research Institute
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

James D. Wright, Ph.D.
Peter H. Rossi, Ph.D.
Principal Investigators

1980

802/327

Control # STATE DEPT # (1-5)

. . . ABOUT THIS SURVEY

This survey is concerned with finding out:

. . . *Responsibilities and practices* of your department for enforcing state and local regulations concerning firearms

. . . Your department's practices about *recording* data on weapons encountered in police work

. . . Departmental *usage* of national weapons tracing systems (NCIC, ATF)

. . . Departmental *experiences* with crimes in which firearms were involved

. . . Special issues, problems, and needs of police departments in dealing with firearm crimes and firearms regulations

. . . HOW THIS SURVEY WILL BE USED

. . . To improve planning for data collection on criminal uses of firearms

. . . To improve police usage of national weapons tracing systems

. . . To document experiences of police departments with state and local firearms regulations

. . . To aid police departments by suggesting workable firearms data collection policies that will not burden departments

. . . ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY

Data produced by this survey will be handled by merging your answers with those produced by comparable departments — of the same size and of the same region of the country.

NO INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENT'S ANSWERS WILL BE IDENTIFIED TO ANY PERSON OR AGENCY. Your individual answers will only by seen by the research staff and then only for the purpose of adding your replies to the project data files.

. . . ABOUT REPORTS FROM THE SURVEY

Summary reports will be made available to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the Department of Justice and to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, as well as to the general public.

Brief summaries will be sent to all cooperating police departments.

. . . HOW TO ANSWER THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Most of the questions can be answered by circling a number that represents the response that is closest to what applies to your department.

Police departments are all different. Although we have tried to allow for answers that will fit the experiences and practices in each department, we know that for some, the replies we allow for will not fit local conditions exactly. PLEASE EXPLAIN OR ELABORATE YOUR ANSWER IN THE BLANK SPACES PROVIDED THROUGHOUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE, IF THE RESPONSES WE HAVE ALLOWED FOR DO NOT FIT THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUR DEPARTMENT PRECISELY.

. . . SOME DEFINITIONS

State and local laws vary in how firearms are defined, especially HANDGUNS and LONG GUNS. *We want you to use the definitions that apply in your jurisdiction.* (If there are special difficulties in using your local definitions, please make note of the problem in appropriate spaces on the questionnaire.)

* * * * * * * *

If you have questions or problems completing this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to call us collect during our office hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time):

Social and Demographic Research Institute (413) 545-3418

SECTION I: YOUR DEPARTMENT'S FIREARMS REGULATION ACTIVITIES

Listed below are activities police departments sometimes perform in the regulation of firearms. In some places, these functions are required under state or local laws, but in others, departments simply have traditionally taken on these activities on their own.

For each function listed, please circle whether that particular type of regulation is required under the law and whether your department or some other agency performs that function.

Q-1	Function	REQUIRED BY LAW AND DONE BY		NOT REQUIRED BY LAW BUT DONE BY		NOT DONE IN JURISDICTION	UNSURE
		Your Dept.	Other Agency	Your Dept.	Other Agency		
(10)	a. Issue licenses to firearms *wholesalers.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(11)	b. Issue licenses to firearms *retailers.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(12)	c. Conduct investigations of persons applying to become *firearms retailers.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(13)	d. Issue *hunting* licenses or permits.	5	4	3	2	1	8
(14)	e. Issue licenses, permits or identification cards to *purchase long guns.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(15)	f. Issue licenses, permits or identification cards to *purchase handguns.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(16)	g. Issue licenses, permits, or identification cards to *possess long guns.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(17)	h. Issue licenses, permits, or identification cards to *possess handguns.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(18)	i. Issue licenses or permits to *sell ammunition.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(19)	j. Conduct investigations of persons applying for a license or permit to *purchase or possess* a firearm.	5	4	3	2	1	8
(20)	k. Handle *registration of long guns.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(21)	l. Handle *registration of handguns.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(22)	m. Issue permits to *carry* firearms *openly.*	5	4	3	2	1	8
(23)	n. Issue permits to *carry concealed* firearms.	5	4	3	2	1	8
(24)	o. Conduct investigations of persons who have applied for a permit to *carry* a firearm.	5	4	3	2	1	8

Q-2 Does your department ever offer courses or training sessions in the use of firearms that private citizens can attend?

(25)

YES, REGULARLY	3
YES, SOMETIMES	2
NO, NEVER	1

(26-27) PLEASE ELABORATE AS YOU WISH ON YOUR DEPARTMENT'S ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICES IN THE FIREARMS AREA. (For example, other types of firearms regulation activities that are not included in the above list.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q-3 Are citizens and/or firearms retailers in your jurisdiction required by law to report *lost* or *stolen* firearms to the police or other local authority?
(PLEASE ANSWER SEPARATELY FOR RETAILERS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS.)

	RETAILERS	PRIVATE CITIZENS
(28-29) YES, FOR ALL FIREARMS	3	3
YES, FOR HANDGUNS ONLY	2	2
NO	1	1
UNSURE	8	8

Q-4 In some places it is very easy to *purchase a handgun legally*. In other places it is very difficult to do so *legally*. *Illegal purchases* of handguns may also be very difficult or very easy to make.

How difficult would it be for adults to purchase handguns in your jurisdiction?
(PLEASE ANSWER SEPARATELY FOR LEGAL PURCHASES AND ILLEGAL PURCHASES.)

	LEGAL PURCHASES	ILLEGAL PURCHASES
(30-31) EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO PURCHASE A HANDGUN HERE	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
ABOUT AVERAGE	4	4
	5	5
	6	6
EXTREMELY EASY TO PURCHASE A HANDGUN HERE	7	7
UNSURE	8	8

SECTION II: DEPARTMENT ROUTINE RECORD-KEEPING PRACTICES

These questions concern the kinds of information your department would usually keep in its records on the firearms that are used in committing crimes.

Each of the questions pose brief descriptions of typical situations in which firearms are involved. Some of the situations are relatively common, and others are infrequent.

For each situation, we want to know what information about the firearms involved would be typically obtained by your department and can be found in the records about such cases.

CIRCLE WHAT YOU THINK WOULD BE TYPICALLY OBTAINED IN EACH CASE.

"ACTUALLY RECORDED" means that the item of information asked about *usually* would appear somewhere on the records for cases of that sort.

"SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED" means that the item of information is one that would probably be sought for in the investigation, but that it would not usually appear in the records.

"NEITHER" means that the item of information is something that your department would not be concerned to ascertain or to record.

Situation #1: Found Weapon

A citizen calls the police department to report that she has found a firearm on a vacant lot near her residence. A patrolman is sent out to recover the firearm.

Q-5.1 In this situation, the following information would be . . . . . .

		ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(32)	a. Type of firearm (rifle, handgun, shotgun, etc.).	3	2	1
(33)	b. Firearm serial number (if available).	3	2	1
(34)	c. Manufacturer of the firearm.	3	2	1
(35)	d. Whether the firearm was loaded.	3	2	1
(36)	e. Whether the firearm had been recently fired.	3	2	1
(37)	f. Approximate price or value of the firearm.	3	2	1
(38)	g. Approximate age of the firearm.	3	2	1
(39)	h. Caliber or barrel length of the firearm.	3	2	1

Q-5.2 Would an effort be made to determine whether the firearm had been reported as lost or stolen?

(40)	YES, DEFINITELY	4
	YES, PROBABLY	3
	NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
	NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
	UNSURE	8

Q-5.3 Would an effort be made to determine the owner of the firearm (for example, by checking state or local permit or registration records or initiating an ATF trace)?

(41)	YES, DEFINITELY	4
	YES, PROBABLY	3
	NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
	NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
	UNSURE	8

Situation #2: Stolen Weapon Reported by Owner

A citizen calls the department to report a burglary in which a firearm, along with other items, has been stolen. Officers are sent to investigate and make a report.

Q-6.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(42)	a. Type of firearm (rifle, handgun, shotgun, etc.).	3	2	1
(43)	b. Firearm serial number (if available).	3	2	1
(44)	c. Manufacturer of the firearm.	3	2	1
(45)	d. Approximate price or value of the firearm.	3	2	1
(46)	e. Approximate age of the firearm.	3	2	1
(47)	f. Caliber or barrel length of the firearm.	3	2	1

Q-6.2 In the course of investigating this situation, would your department make an effort to determine whether the firearm was legally possessed by the person who reported it stolen?

(48)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-6.3 Would your department enter the information about the stolen firearm on the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system?

(49)

YES	1
NO	2
UNSURE	8

Q-6.4 Is there a local or regional "stolen weapons" file (either in your city, county, or state) to which information about this firearm would be sent?

(50)

YES	1
NO	2
UNSURE	8

Situation #3: Citizen Robbed at Gunpoint

A citizen reports that he has been robbed at gunpoint; his automobile and other personal valuables were stolen. Officers are sent to investigate.

Q-7.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(51)	a. Type of firearm (rifle, handgun, shotgun, etc.).	3	2	1
(52)	b. Whether the firearm had been fired in the incident.	3	2	1

Q-7.2 In the course of the investigation of this situation, would the citizen who had been robbed be asked to provide a description of the *firearm*?

(53)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-7.3 And would the citizen's description of the firearm then become part of the record or file on this case?

(54)

YES	1
NO	2
UNSURE	8
INAPPLICABLE: NO DESCRIPTION OF THE FIREARM WOULD BE OBTAINED	0

Situation #4: Arrest of a Suspected Robber

A man is apprehended near the scene of a reported robbery who fits the description provided by the victim. The officer in charge finds a handgun on the suspect.

Q-8.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(55)	a. Handgun serial number (if available).	3	2	1
(56)	b. Manufacturer of the handgun.	3	2	1
(57)	c. Whether the handgun was loaded.	3	2	1
(58)	d. Whether the handgun had been recently fired.	3	2	1
(59)	e. Approximate price or value of the handgun.	3	2	1
(60)	f. Approximate age of the handgun.	3	2	1
(61)	g. Caliber or barrel length of the handgun.	3	2	1
(62)	h. Whether the suspect had a prior record of firearms violations.	3	2	1

(Situation #4 continued)

Q-8.2 Would any effort be made to determine whether the handgun had been reported as lost or stolen?

(63)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-8.3 Would your department attempt to determine whether the handgun was legally possessed by the suspect?

(64)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Situation #5: Illegal Possession of a Handgun

A suspected drunken driver is pulled over by an officer. On the front seat is a handgun. A subsequent check reveals that the handgun was illegally possessed according to local jurisdictional regulations.

Q-9.1

In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(65) a. Handgun serial number (if available)	3	2	1
(66) b. Manufacturer of the handgun.	3	2	1
(67) c. Whether the handgun was loaded at the time.	3	2	1
(68) d. Whether the handgun had been recently fired.	3	2	1
(69) e. Approximate price or value of the handgun.	3	2	1
(70) f. Approximate age of the handgun.	3	2	1
(71) g. Caliber or barrel length of the handgun.	3	2	1
(72) h. Whether the offender had a prior record of firearms violations.	3	2	1

Q-9.2 Would any effort be made to determine whether the handgun had been reported as lost or stolen?

(73)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Situation #6: Assault with a Firearm

A citizen calls the department to report that he has been assaulted by a neighbor and threatened with a gun. Officers are sent to investigate, and the neighbor is arrested and charged.

Q-10.1
(CARD II)

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(10)	a. Type of firearm (rifle, handgun, shotgun, etc.).	3	2	1
(11)	b. Firearm serial number (if available).	3	2	1
(12)	c. Manufacturer of the firearm.	3	2	1
(13)	d. Whether the firearm was loaded at the time of the incident.	3	2	1
(14)	e. Whether the firearm had been fired during the incident.	3	2	1
(15)	f. Approximate price or value of the firearm.	3	2	1
(16)	g. Approximate age of the firearm.	3	2	1
(17)	h. Caliber or barrel length of the firearm.	3	2	1
(18)	i. Whether the offender had a prior record of firearms offenses.	3	2	1

Q-10.2 Would an effort be made to determine whether the firearm was legally possessed by the offender?

(19)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	3
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-10.3 Would any effort be made to find out whether the firearm had been reported as lost or stolen?

(20)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Situation #7: Reported Rape at Gunpoint

A citizen reports that she has been raped by an unknown assailant who threatened her with a gun. An officer is sent to investigate and makes a report.

Q-11.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(21)	a. Type of firearm (rifle, handgun, shotgun, etc.)	3	2	1
(22)	b. Whether the firearm had been fired in the incident.	3	2	1

Q-11.2 In the course of the investigation, would the citizen who had been raped be asked to provide a description of the *firearm*?

(23)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-11.3 And would the citizen's description of the firearm then become part of the record or file on this case?

(24)

YES	1
NO	2
UNSURE	8
INAPPLICABLE: NO DESCRIPTION OF THE FIREARM WOULD BE OBTAINED	0

Situation #8: Accidental Gun Shot Incident

A citizen calls the department to report that he has been accidentally shot in the hand by a neighbor while being shown the neighbor's handgun collection. An officer is sent to investigate and makes a report. No arrest is made.

Q-12.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(25)	a. Type of firearm.	3	2	1
(26)	b. Firearm serial number (if available).	3	2	1
(27)	c. Manufacturer of the firearm.	3	2	1
(28)	d. Approximate price or value of the firearm.	3	2	1
(29)	e. Approximate age of the firearm.	3	2	1
(30)	f. Caliber or barrel length of the firearm.	3	2	1

Q-12.2 Would any effort be made to determine whether the firearm was legally possessed by the neighbor?

(31)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Situation #9: Illegal Taking of Game

A local farmer calls the department to report that he has heard gunshots in the woods adjacent to his property. An officer is sent to investigate and apprehends a man who has killed a deer out of season and without a hunting license.

Q-13.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(32)	a. Type of firearm.	3	2	1
(33)	b. Firearm serial number.	3	2	1
(34)	c. Manufacturer of the firearm.	3	2	1
(35)	d. Approximate age of the firearm.	3	2	1
(36)	e. Approximate price or value of the firearm.	3	2	1
(37)	f. Caliber or gauge of the firearm.	3	2	1
(38)	g. Whether the offender had a prior record of firearms offenses.	3	2	1

Q-13.2 Would an effort be made to determine whether the firearm had been reported as lost or stolen?

(39)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-13.3 Would any effort be made to determine whether the firearm was legally possessed by the offender?

(40)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Situation #10: Homicide or Suicide

A citizen calls to report that his children have found a body while playing in a local park. Investigating officers are sent; no obvious suspect is present, but a handgun is found in a nearby drainage ditch. Subsequent investigation suggests that the handgun is the likely cause of the death.

Q-14.1

	In this situation, the following information would be	ACTUALLY RECORDED	SOUGHT BUT NOT RECORDED	NEITHER
(41)	a. Type of handgun.	3	2	1
(42)	b. Handgun serial number (if available).	3	2	1
(43)	c. Manufacturer of the handgun.	3	2	1
(44)	d. Approximate price or value of the handgun.	3	2	1
(45)	e. Approximate age of the handgun.	3	2	1
(46)	f. Caliber or barrel length of the handgun.	3	2	1

Q-14.2 Would an effort be made to determine whether the handgun had been reported as lost or stolen?

(47)

YES, DEFINITELY	4
YES, PROBABLY	3
NO, PROBABLY NOT	2
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	1
UNSURE	8

Q-14.3 Would an effort be made to determine the owner of the handgun, for example, by checking state or local permit or registration records or by initiating an ATF trace?

(48)

YES	1
NO	2
UNSURE	8

(49-54) PLEASE USE THIS SPACE TO ELABORATE AS YOU SEE FIT ON YOUR DEPARTMENT'S STANDARD PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES IN REGARD TO WEAPONS USED IN CRIME.

Q-15 In your opinion, which of the following statements best characterizes your department's standard procedure in regard to *recording* (as part of the permanent case record) the presence of a firearm in the commission of a crime for each of the following three situations.

If the firearm was . . .

		In the suspect's possession but not actually used in the incident	Brandished or displayed in the incident but not actually fired	Actually fired in the incident
(55-57)	THE PRESENCE OF THE FIREARM WOULD ALWAYS BE RECORDED	4	4	4
	THE PRESENCE OF THE FIREARM WOULD USUALLY BE RECORDED	3	3	3
	THE PRESENCE OF THE FIREARM WOULD BE RECORDED ONLY SOMETIMES	2	2	2
	THE PRESENCE OF THE FIREARM WOULD GENERALLY *NOT* BE RECORDED	1	1	1

Q-16 Do any of your standard departmental report forms contain a box or other device whereby the presence or absence of a firearm in a crime can be regularly and routinely recorded?

(59)	YES	1
	NO	2
	UNSURE	8

Q-17 Do any of your standard departmental report forms contain a box or other special device where an officer can record whether a firearm was confiscated in an incident?

(60)	YES	1
	NO	2
	UNSURE	8

Q-18 Many police departments regularly supply monthly or yearly reports on criminal issues — crimes reported, arrests made, etc. — to federal and state agencies.

How easy or how burdensome are such reports to your department? Please circle the appropriate response:

		VERY BURDENSOME			to		NO TROUBLE AT ALL
(61)	a. Drain on personnel time	1	2	3	4	5	6
(62)	b. Detail required on forms	1	2	3	4	5	6
(63)	c. Equipment costs	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q-19 The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) has been considering asking police departments to prepare annual summaries on firearms used in committing crimes and on related topics.

For each of the types of information below, answer "yes" or "no" for whether your department *presently* prepares annual summaries. *If you answer no,* please indicate how easy or difficult it would be to prepare annual summaries, given the current record-keeping practices and procedures used in your department.

Question 19 continued

			SUMMARIES PREPARED? YES	NO	*IF SUMMARIES ARE NOT PREPARED* VERY ..... to ..... VERY EASY				DIFFICULT
(64-65)	a.	Annual number of arrests for illegal possession or carrying of firearms	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(66-67)	b.	Annual number of crimes in which firearms were used (except illegal possession or carrying)	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(68-69)	c.	Annual number of firearms confiscated	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(70-71)	d.	Annual number of firearms reported stolen	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(72-73)	e.	Annual number of crimes by each type of weapon (knives, handguns, long guns, etc.)	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(74-75)	f.	Proportions of each major type of crime by whether a weapon was present	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(CARD III)									
(10-11)	g.	Annual number of times ATF weapons tracing system was used by department	1	2	5	4	3	2	1
(12-13)	h.	Number and types of weapons owned by the department and purchased over the year	1	2	5	4	3	2	1

IF YOUR DEPARTMENT PREPARES SUMMARY REPORTS IN ANY OF THESE AREAS, PLEASE ENCLOSE COPIES ALONG WITH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

Q-20 In your estimation, would it be necessary for your department to change its record-keeping practices and procedures in order to provide the summary information described in Q-19?

(14)
- No changes would be necessary — 1 → skip to Q-21
- Slight changes would be necessary — 2
- Major changes would be necessary — 3

→ answer a to d below

Circle the kinds of changes that would be necessary.

			Yes	No
(15)	a.	New forms would have to be drawn up	1	2
(16)	b.	Additional personnel would have to be added.	1	2
(17)	c.	Additional funds would have to be sought in budget.	1	2
(18)	d.	Special training of personnel would have to be undertaken.	1	2
(19)	e.	Other (please elaborate)		

Q-21 And in general, how do you think the department would react to such requests: would the department be anxious and eager to cooperate, or would there be resentment about the additional paperwork and administrative burden?

(20)

EAGER TO COOPERATE 7
6
5
NEUTRAL 4
3
2
MUCH RESENTMENT 1

SECTION III. DEPARTMENTAL USE OF NCIC SYSTEM AND ATF FIREARMS TRACE SERVICES

Both the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) are sources that can be used to check on firearms used in crime. The following questions ask about your department's use of and experience with these NCIC and ATF services.

Q-22 First, does your department have direct access to the NCIC services through an interactive computer terminal that is owned or leased by your department?

	YES, WE HAVE DIRECT ACCESS	1
(21)	NO, WE DO NOT HAVE DIRECT ACCESS	2

IF NO:

Does your department have access to these services through a terminal in another nearby department or law enforcement agency?

(22)	YES	1
	NO	2

Q-23 Does your department have a staff member (or members) who is (are) familiar with the use of a computer terminal?

(23)	YES	1
	NO	2
	UNSURE	8

Q-24 For firearms discovered in the course of an investigation and suspected of being implicated in a crime, how frequently would you say your department utilizes the NCIC system or ATF trace service about those firearms? (Assume that the necessary identifying information about the firearm is available.) (CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE FOR BOTH NCIC AND ATF.)

		NCIC	ATF
	EVERY FIREARM IS CHECKED	1	1
(24-25)	MOST FIREARMS ARE CHECKED	2	2
	ONLY SOME FIREARMS ARE CHECKED	3	3
	FIREARMS ARE VERY SELDOM CHECKED	4	4
	FIREARMS ARE NEVER CHECKED	5	5
	(SKIP TO QUESTION Q-29 IF YOUR DEPARTMENT USES NEITHER ATF NOR NCIC.)		

(ANSWER Q-25 to Q-28 ONLY IF YOU USE NCIC OR ATF)

Q-25 For firearms that are found, confiscated, or recovered, how often are the NCIC system or ATF trace procedures used? (CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE FOR BOTH NCIC AND ATF.)

		NCIC	ATF
	EVERY FIREARM IS CHECKED	1	1
(26-27)	MOST FIREARMS ARE CHECKED	2	2
	ONLY SOME FIREARMS ARE CHECKED	3	3
	FIREARMS ARE VERY SELDOM CHECKED	4	4
	FIREARMS ARE NEVER CHECKED	5	5

Q-26 Overall, how would you characterize your department's experiences with the *NCIC* system?

	USUALLY USEFUL	4
	OFTEN USEFUL	3
(28)	SELDOM USEFUL	2
	USELESS	1
	INAPPLICABLE (NEVER USED NCIC)	0

Q-27 And how about the *ATF* tracing service?

	USUALLY USEFUL	4
	OFTEN USEFUL	3
(29)	SELDOM USEFUL	2
	USELESS	1
	INAPPLICABLE (NEVER USED ATF)	0

ANSWER Q-28 ONLY IF YOU USE NCIC OR ATF

Q-28 Following are some of the problems police departments have sometimes had using the ATF service and NCIC system. In your department's experience, how serious have each of these problems been?
(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE FOR BOTH NCIC AND ATF.)

	a. Frequent delays in response.	NCIC	ATF
	VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM	4	4
(30-31)	SOMEWHAT SERIOUS	3	3
	NOT TOO SERIOUS	2	2
	NOT SERIOUS AT ALL	1	1
	INAPPLICABLE (NEVER USED)	0	0

	b. Information obtained is not accurate.	NCIC	ATF
	VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM	4	4
(32-33)	SOMEWHAT SERIOUS	3	3
	NOT TOO SERIOUS	2	2
	NOT SERIOUS AT ALL	1	1
	INAPPLICABLE (NEVER USED)	0	0

	c. Costs to the department of using the system are high.	NCIC	ATF
	VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM	4	4
(34-35)	SOMEWHAT SERIOUS	3	3
	NOT TOO SERIOUS	2	2
	NOT SERIOUS AT ALL	1	1
	INAPPLICABLE (NEVER USED)	0	0

	d. Information obtained does not help the department to solve crimes.	NCIC	ATF
	VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM	4	4
(36-37)	SOMEWHAT SERIOUS	3	3
	NOT TOO SERIOUS	2	2
	NOT SERIOUS AT ALL	1	1
	INAPPLICABLE (NEVER USED)	0	0

SECTION IV. DEPARTMENTAL PROCEDURES FOR STORAGE AND DISPOSITION OF CONFISCATED FIREARMS

The following questions concern firearms that come into departmental possession in each of three ways:

EVIDENCE IN A CASE: Firearms that are taken because they may constitute physical evidence in a case.

ILLEGALLY POSSESSED: Firearms taken from individuals who were found to possess them illegally or to use them in illegal ways.

FOUND FIREARMS: Firearms discovered by the police or reported to them for which no owner is known.

For each of these three circumstances, indicate how your department handles firearms that come into its possession.

		EVIDENCE IN A CASE		ILLEGALLY POSSESSED		FOUND FIREARMS	
		YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Q-29 (38-39)	Is a receipt given to the person from whom the firearm is taken?	1	2	1	2	—	—
Q-30 (40-42)	Does the firearm remain in the custody of the officer who recovered it?	1	2	1	2	1	2
Q-31 (43-45)	Would the firearm be stored in a police property room?	1	2	1	2	1	2
Q-32 (46-48)	Would the firearm be sold to a firearms dealer after some period of time?	1	2	1	2	1	2
Q-33 (49-51)	Would the firearm be destroyed after some period of time?	1	2	1	2	1	2
Q-34 (52-54)	Would the firearm be sold in a police property auction after some period of time?	1	2	1	2	1	2
Q-35 (55-57)	Would it eventually be possible for the owner to reclaim the firearm?	1	2	1	2	1	2

(58-62) PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ELABORATE AS YOU WISH ON YOUR DEPARTMENT'S PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONFISCATED FIREARMS.

SECTION V: DEPARTMENTAL COMPUTER USE

In the past decade, many police departments have begun to use computers for processing police records. The questions below ask about different kinds of computer usage in your department, EXCLUDING USE OF THE NCIC SYSTEM.

Q-36 Are any of your department's records (not counting payroll and purchasing) processed by computer?

(63)

NO COMPUTER USAGE (besides payroll and purchasing)	1 (SKIP to Q-40)
SOME COMPUTER USAGE (excluding NCIC)	2 (ANSWER Q-37 to Q-39 BELOW)

Q-37 Which of the following records have been computerized?

		YES	NO
(64)	a. Arrest records	1	2
(65)	b. Reported crimes	1	2
(66)	c. Dispatch calls for police	1	2
(67)	d. Parking violations	1	2
(68)	e. Traffic violations	1	2
(69)	f. Outstanding warrants	1	2

Q-38 What is the computer equipment used by your department?

		YES	NO
(70)	a. Separate police department installation	1	2
(71)	b. Shared system with other agencies	1	2

Q-39 What has been your department's experience with computerization?

COMPUTERIZATION HAS BEEN INVALUABLE IN THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT						COMPUTERIZATION OFTEN SEEMS TO BE MORE TROUBLE THAN IT IS WORTH
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(CARD IV)

Now, just a few more general questions about your department . . .

Q-40 Considering all the various crimes your department has to deal with in the course of its day-to-day activities, how big a problem would you say crimes committed with firearms are in your jurisdiction?

(10)

VERY BIG PART OF OUR TOTAL PROBLEM	4
SUBSTANTIAL PART OF OUR TOTAL PROBLEM	3
NOT A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF OUR TOTAL PROBLEM	2
NOT REALLY A PROBLEM HERE AT ALL	1

Q-41 How big a problem to your department is illegal traffic in firearms (for example, circulation of stolen weapons, weapons thefts, black marketeering in illegal firearms, etc.)?

(11)

VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM	4
SOMEWHAT SERIOUS PROBLEM	3
NOT TOO SERIOUS A PROBLEM	2
NO PROBLEM AT ALL	1

Q-42 In many states and local communities, the issue of regulations over gun ownership and sales has been controversial. In your memory have any of the following issues been a matter of controversy in your state and local community in 1978 or 1979? (PLEASE ANSWER FOR BOTH STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS.)

	Issue	STATE		LOCAL	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
(12-13)	a. Proposals for closer regulation of handgun sales	1	2	1	2
(14-15)	b. Proposals for closer regulation of long gun sales	1	2	1	2
(16-17)	c. Proposals for mandatory sentences for crimes committed with guns	1	2	1	2
(18-19)	d. Proposals for closer regulation of handgun possession	1	2	1	2
(20-21)	e. Proposals for closer regulation of long gun possession	1	2	1	2

Q-43 During the most recent complete fiscal year, what was the total number of persons employed in your police department? (Please write the numbers in the spaces provided.)

(22-27) TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICE OFFICERS _____

(28-33) TOTAL NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL _____

Please fill in below the name, position, and phone number of the person who had primary responsibility for completing this questionnaire.

Name _____

Position _____

Phone No. _____

Most police departments have a package of standardized reporting forms that are routinely used to process an incident or case. IF YOUR DEPARTMENT USES STANDARDIZED REPORTING FORMS AND YOU HAVE COPIES AVAILABLE, PLEASE ENCLOSE THEM WITH THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please check the space provided if you would like to have a copy of the results of this survey sent to your department.

[ ] YES, PLEASE SEND A COPY OF THE SURVEY RESULTS TO:

_____

_____

_____

_____

MAIL THIS COMPLETED SURVEY FORM IN THE ENCLOSED POST-PAID ENVELOPE.

DO NOT FORGET TO INCLUDE:

(1) Copies of your department's standard report forms (i.e., case report, arrest reports, etc.), if available.

(2) Copies of summary information on crimes committed in your jurisdiction, in particular weapons- or firearms-related incidents.